6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

A woman's position in the family, and the prerogatives and duties which she has to perform, are not the same in the different groups of the Georgian Highlanders. As a general trait among them, we may mention woman's subordinate position to man; her husband is her superior, but not absolute master and lord.

The Pshav woman takes part in all kinds of work in the family life,[6] although there are some kinds of work done by men only. "In the Pshav family, where male members are present," writes Khizanashvili,[7] "the woman never cuts the grass, ploughs or takes an axe in hand."

With the Khevsurs, with the exception of the preparation of the land, tilling and ploughing, the work is accomplished by the women. "The women do most of the field work," writes Zisserman,[8] "man's part being the ploughing and mowing." The same information concerning the sexual division of labor among the Khevsurs is given by N. A. Busch also.[9] According to Eristov,[10] the mowing of grass also was executed by the women, so that only ploughing was left for men. It was also woman's obligation to bring straw and fire-wood from the far mountain slopes where it was stored. This was an especially hazardous undertaking in the winter, when all precipices and crevices were covered with deep snow. Dr. G. Radde describes this in his work dealing with the Khevsurs. "Den Maennern an Kraft stehen uebrigens die Weiber wenig nach," writes Dr. Radde.[11] "Sie sind es ja, die fast ausschliesslich arbeiten und alle Geschaefte liegen ihnen ob, mit Ausnahme des Ackerns un der Heumat. Im winter, wenn in hohen Schnee die Chewsurischen Doerfer gebettet da liegen, muss das Weib im Sommer an der Baumgrenze fertig gestellten Holzbuendel oft drei bis fier *Werst*[12] zum Hause schleppen und das auf den steilsten Kaum eingetretenen Gebirgsfaden."

With the Tushes, the woman is in a position similar to that of

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[6] Pshavia: 252.
[7] Khizanashvili: 137.
[8] Zisserman: 212.
[9] Busch: 224.
[10] Eristov: 123.
[11] Radde: d, 73.
[12] *Werst*—the Russian measure of length—0.66 mile.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

the Khevsur woman, and executes field work besides the housework.[13]

On the other hand, "among the Svans[14] woman is not oppressed, "she takes care only of the work about the home. In comparison[15] with the other mountaineers of the Caucasus, the Svans recognize in woman a considerable amount of independence. Among Balkars and Ossetes, all the work at home, as well as in the fields, is done by women; not so with the Svans, among whom woman enjoys much more leisure." Contrary to the above stated views are the views of the French investigator, R. Bernoville, in his description of the position of the Svan woman, which, however, does not correspond to reality. "La femme, traitée sans grand respect, je le crains," he writes,[16] "est cependant libre, et son attitude respire en général une certain indépendance d'allures. Seulement le Souane, fort paresseux de son natural, se décharge volontiers sur elle des travaux pénibles des champs." The women of the Svans take care of the housework, and also help the men in the field work.[17] The men plough, sow and harrow; the women mellow the soil. Hay is sown by the men and gathered by the women; harvesting is done by both sexes together.

Besides these differences in the manual work at home and in the fields, there are also other differences between man and woman in the communities of the Georgian Highlanders as expressed in possession of rights and the performance of duties. Woman is excluded from inheritance rights; she is totally ignored in some cases or counted as only half a man in the payment of blood money (the *wergild*) during a blood-feud. Her rights in divorce are limited; she is not admitted to a witness stand at judicial proceedings, is regarded as unclean, and is barred from entering the sanctuary of the community and from taking part in the religious festivals and holidays on an equal footing with men. In spite of all these restrictions of her actions and rights, she was never a "slave," or a "beast of burden," or a "chattel" of her husband's.

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[13] Khakhanov: a, 52.
[14] Teptsov: a, 53.
[15] Kovalevsky: a, II, 49.
[16] Bernoville: 106.
[17] Dmitriev: 180.

7:Columbia U. S-4, 5 1956 RHl ,Caucasia RHl
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POSITION OF WOMEN

C. G. 562 The position of women in the Caucasus was in many respects subordinate to that of men: male children were preferred, descent was patrilineal, residence patrilocal, women were excluded from inheritance rights; in case the headwoman was unable to reconcile a quarrel among the female members of the family, the case was put before the headman; divorces C G [684] were in general more easily obtained by men than by women, and in the case of adultery the husband had the right to kill or disfigure his wife. The Circassian code of behavior forbade women to sit down while men were standing, and the husband was addressed in terms of respect by his wife. C G [762] In most areas the women led a life of hard work; besides doing the housework, they also assisted in the work in the field, though certain activities such as tending horses and in most cases ploughing were performed by men only. Among the Georgian mountaineers, women were regarded from a religious point of view as unclean, and were forbidden to enter the walled precincts C. C. [834] of the sanctuaries; the Svan had sexual avoidance rules to ensure success in hunting expeditions; in Mingrelia a woman may not kill a chicken or animal she is going to prepare, as this would spoil the food.